

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

v.

20-CR- 6093

FRANK SALERNO,

Defendant.

**PLEA AGREEMENT**

The defendant, FRANK SALERNO, and the United States Attorney for the Western District of New York (hereinafter "the government") hereby enter into a plea agreement with the terms and conditions as set out below.

**I. THE PLEA AND POSSIBLE SENTENCE**

1. The defendant agrees to waive indictment and plead guilty to a one-count Information charging a violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 2252A(a)(2)(A) (receipt of child pornography), for which the mandatory minimum term of imprisonment is 5 years and the maximum possible sentence is a term of imprisonment of 20 years, a fine of \$250,000, a \$100 special assessment, and a term of supervised release of 5 years and up to life. The defendant understands that the penalties set forth in this paragraph are the maximum penalties that can be imposed by the Court at sentencing.

2. The defendant understands that the Court must impose an assessment of not more than \$17,000 for the offense of conviction pursuant to Title 18, United States Code,

Section 2259A(a)(1), in addition to any other criminal penalty, restitution, or special assessment. The defendant further understands that, unless the defendant is indigent, the Court must impose a special assessment of \$5,000 for the offense of conviction pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 3014.

3. The defendant understands that, if it is determined that the defendant has violated any of the terms or conditions of supervised release, the defendant may be required to serve in prison all or part of the term of supervised release, up to 2 years, without credit for time previously served on supervised release and if the defendant commits any criminal offense under Chapter 109A, 110 or 117, or Sections 1201 or 1591 of Title 18, United States Code, for which imprisonment for a term longer than 1 year can be imposed, the defendant shall be sentenced to a term of imprisonment of not less than 5 years and up to life. As a consequence, in the event the defendant is sentenced to the maximum term of incarceration, a prison term imposed for a violation of supervised release may result in the defendant serving a sentence of imprisonment longer than the statutory maximums set forth in Paragraph 1 of this agreement.

4. The defendant has been advised and understands that under the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act, the defendant must register and keep registration current in all of the following jurisdictions: where the defendant resides; where the defendant is employed; and where the defendant is a student. The defendant understands the requirements for registration include providing the defendant's name, residence address, and the names and addresses of any places where the defendant is or will be an employee or student, among other information. The defendant further understands that the requirement to keep the registration

current includes informing at least one jurisdiction in which the defendant resides, is an employee, or is a student, not later than three (3) business days after, any change of the defendant's name, residence, employment, or student status. The defendant has been advised and understands that failure to comply with these obligations subjects the defendant to prosecution for failure to register under federal law, Title 18, United States Code, Section 2250, which is punishable by imprisonment, a fine, or both.

## **II. ELEMENTS AND FACTUAL BASIS**

5. The defendant understands the nature of the offense set forth in paragraph 1 of this agreement and understands that if this case proceeded to trial, the government would be required to prove beyond a reasonable doubt the following elements of the crime:

- a. That the defendant knowingly received a visual depiction;
- b. The visual depiction had been shipped or transported in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce using any means or facility of interstate or foreign commerce; or had been shipped or transported in or affecting interstate or foreign commerce by any means, including by computer;
- c. The visual depiction was child pornography; and
- d. The defendant knew what he received constituted child pornography.

### **FACTUAL BASIS**

6. The defendant and the government agree to the following facts, which form the basis for the entry of the plea of guilty, including relevant conduct:

- a. Between June 21, 2019 and November 26, 2019, the defendant, who was 29-30 years of age and residing in the state of Massachusetts, engaged in sexually explicit conversations via Instagram with a 14 year old female (the Victim), who was in the Western District of New York.

The defendant was aware that the Victim was a minor when he communicated with her.

- b. Knowing that the Victim was a minor, the defendant persuaded, induced, and enticed the Victim to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of producing visual depictions of such conduct. Specifically, the defendant asked the Victim to send him nude photographs of herself, to include photographs depicting the lascivious exhibition of the Victim's genitals. In response, the Victim produced and sent the defendant nude photographs of herself, which constituted child pornography as defined by Title 18, United States Code, Section 2256(8).
- c. The photographs traveled in interstate commerce, from New York to Massachusetts. Instagram operates using the Internet, which is a means and facility of interstate and foreign commerce. The defendant received the child pornography depicting the Victim on his LG smartphone, IMEI# 35760309324549. The phone was manufactured in Vietnam.
- d. At all times relevant, the defendant acted knowingly in that he knew what he received constituted child pornography.

### **III. SENTENCING GUIDELINES**

7. The defendant understands that the Court must consider but is not bound by the Sentencing Guidelines (Sentencing Reform Act of 1984).

#### **BASE OFFENSE LEVEL**

8. The government and the defendant agree that pursuant to Sentencing Guidelines § 2G2.2(c)(1), Guidelines § 2G2.1(a) applies to the offense of conviction and provides for a base offense level of 32.

**SPECIFIC OFFENSE CHARACTERISTICS**  
**U.S.S.G. CHAPTER 2 ADJUSTMENTS**

9. The government and the defendant agree that the following specific offense characteristics do apply:

- a. The **two-level** increase pursuant to Guidelines § 2G2.1(b)(1)(B) (the minor had attained the age of 12 years but had not attained the age of 16 years).
- b. The **two-level** increase pursuant to Guidelines § 2G2.1(b)(6) (the offense involved use of a computer).

**ADJUSTED OFFENSE LEVEL**

10. Based on the foregoing, it is the understanding of the government and the defendant that the adjusted offense level for the offense of conviction is 36.

**ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY**

11. At sentencing, the government agrees not to oppose the recommendation that the Court apply the two (2) level downward adjustment of Guidelines § 3E1.1(a) (acceptance of responsibility) and further agrees to move the Court to apply the additional one (1) level downward adjustment of Guidelines § 3E1.1(b), which would result in a **total offense level of 33**.

**CRIMINAL HISTORY CATEGORY**

12. It is the understanding of the government and the defendant that the defendant's criminal history category is III. The defendant understands that if the defendant is sentenced for, or convicted of, any other charges prior to sentencing in this action the defendant's criminal history category may increase. The defendant understands that the

defendant has no right to withdraw the plea of guilty based on the Court's determination of the defendant's criminal history category.

**GUIDELINES' APPLICATION, CALCULATIONS AND IMPACT**

13. It is the understanding of the government and the defendant that, with a total offense level of 33 and criminal history category of III, and taking into account the applicable statutory minimum and maximum penalties, the defendant's sentencing range would be a term of imprisonment of **168 to 210 months, a fine of \$35,000 to \$250,000, and a period of supervised release of 5 years to life.** Notwithstanding this, the defendant understands that at sentencing the defendant is subject to the minimum and maximum penalties set forth in paragraph 1 of this agreement.

14. The government and the defendant agree to the correctness of the calculation of the Sentencing Guidelines range set forth above. The government and the defendant, however, reserve the right to recommend a sentence outside the Sentencing Guidelines range. This paragraph reserves the right to the government and the defendant to bring to the attention of the Court all information deemed relevant to a determination of the proper sentence in this action.

15. The defendant understands that the Court is not bound to accept any Sentencing Guidelines calculations set forth in this agreement and the defendant will not be entitled to withdraw the plea of guilty based on the sentence imposed by the Court.

**IV. STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS**

16. In the event the defendant's plea of guilty is withdrawn, or conviction vacated, either pre- or post-sentence, by way of appeal, motion, post-conviction proceeding, collateral attack or otherwise, the defendant agrees that any charges dismissed pursuant to this agreement shall be automatically reinstated upon motion of the government and further agrees not to assert the statute of limitations as a defense to any federal criminal offense which is not time barred as of the date of this agreement. This waiver shall be effective for a period of six months following the date upon which the withdrawal of the guilty plea or vacating of the conviction becomes final.

**V. REMOVAL**

17. The defendant understands that, if convicted, a defendant who is not a citizen of the United States may be removed from the United States, denied citizenship, and denied admission to the United States in the future.

**VI. GOVERNMENT RIGHTS AND RESERVATIONS**

18. The defendant understands that the government has reserved the right to:
- a. provide to the Probation Office and the Court all the information and evidence in its possession that the government deems relevant concerning the defendant's background, character and involvement in the offense charged, the circumstances surrounding the charge and the defendant's criminal history;
  - b. respond at sentencing to any statements made by the defendant or on the defendant's behalf that are inconsistent with the information and evidence available to the government;

- c. advocate for a specific sentence consistent with the terms of this agreement including the amount of restitution and/or a fine and the method of payment;
- d. modify its position with respect to any sentencing recommendation or sentencing factor under the Guidelines including criminal history category, in the event that subsequent to this agreement the government receives previously unknown information, including conduct and statements by the defendant subsequent to this agreement, regarding the recommendation or factor; and
- e. oppose any application for a downward departure and/or sentence outside the Guidelines range made by the defendant.

19. At sentencing, the government will move to dismiss the remaining counts in the Superseding Indictment 19-MJ-728.

20. The defendant agrees that any financial records and information provided by the defendant to the Probation Office, before or after sentencing, may be disclosed to the United States Attorney's Office for use in the collection of any unpaid financial obligation.

## VII. APPEAL RIGHTS

21. The defendant understands that Title 18, United States Code, Section 3742 affords a defendant a limited right to appeal the sentence imposed. The defendant, however, knowingly waives the right to appeal and collaterally attack any component of a sentence imposed by the Court which falls within or is less than the sentencing range for imprisonment, a fine and supervised release set forth in **Section III, Paragraph 13** above, notwithstanding the manner in which the Court determines the sentence. In the event of an appeal of the



defendant's sentence by the government, the defendant reserves the right to argue the correctness of the defendant's sentence.

22. The defendant understands that by agreeing to not collaterally attack the sentence, the defendant is waiving the right to challenge the sentence in the event that in the future the defendant becomes aware of previously unknown facts or a change in the law which the defendant believes would justify a decrease in the defendant's sentence.

23. The government waives its right to appeal any component of a sentence imposed by the Court which falls within or is greater than the sentencing range for imprisonment, a fine and supervised release set forth in **Section III, Paragraph 13**, above, notwithstanding the manner in which the Court determines the sentence. However, in the event of an appeal from the defendant's sentence by the defendant, the government reserves its right to argue the correctness of the defendant's sentence.

#### **VIII. FORFEITURE PROVISIONS**

24. As a result of his conviction for the foregoing offense alleged in Count 3 of the Superseding Indictment, the defendant agrees to criminally forfeit to the United States pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 2253(a)(1) and (a)(3), any and all property, real and personal, used or intended to be used to commit or to promote the commission of such offense, including but not limited to the following:

- a. One LG smartphone, IMEI# 35760309324549.

25. The defendant also agrees that the property listed above is properly forfeitable to the United States pursuant to Title 18, United States Code, Section 2253(a)(1) and (a)(3). The defendant further agrees to fully assist the government in the forfeiture of the aforementioned property and to take whatever steps are necessary to pass clear title to the United States, including, but not limited to surrender of title and execution of any documents necessary to transfer the defendant's interest in any of the above property to the United States, as deemed necessary by the government.

26. After the acceptance of the defendant's guilty plea, and pursuant to Rule 32.2(b)(2) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure, the government will request a Preliminary Order of Forfeiture covering the item listed above. The defendant hereby waives any right to notice of such Preliminary Order of Forfeiture. The defendant further consents and agrees that the Order of Forfeiture shall become final as to the defendant prior to sentencing and agrees that it shall be made part of the defendant's sentence and included in the Judgment pursuant to Rule 32.2(b)(4) of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure.

27. The defendant agrees to the entry of an Order of Forfeiture for the aforementioned property and waives the requirements of Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure 32.2 and 43(a) regarding notice of the forfeiture in the charging instrument, announcement of the forfeiture at sentencing, and incorporation of the forfeiture in the judgment. Defendant acknowledges that he understands that the forfeiture of property is part of the sentence that may be imposed in this case and waives any failure by the court to advise him of this, pursuant to Rule 11(b)(1)(J), at the time his guilty plea is accepted.

28. The defendant agrees that forfeiture of the aforementioned property as set forth in this agreement shall not be deemed an alteration of the defendant's sentence. Forfeiture of the defendant's property shall not be treated as satisfaction of any fine, restitution, cost of imprisonment, or any other penalty the Court may impose upon the defendant in addition to forfeiture.

29. The defendant knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily waives his right to a jury trial on the forfeiture of the assets and imposition of a civil penalty. The defendant knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily waives all constitutional, legal and equitable defenses to the forfeiture in any proceeding, including any jeopardy defense or claim of double jeopardy, whether constitutional or statutory, as to this criminal proceeding or any related civil or administrative proceeding. The defendant further agrees to waive any claim or defense under the Eighth Amendment to the United States Constitution, including any claim of excessive fine regarding the forfeiture of assets by the United States.

30. The defendant further waives any right to appeal or collaterally attack any matter in connection with the forfeiture of the item as provided in this agreement.

**IX. TOTAL AGREEMENT AND AFFIRMATIONS**

31. This plea agreement represents the total agreement between the defendant, FRANK SALERNO, and the government. There are no promises made by anyone other than those contained in this agreement. This agreement supersedes any other prior agreements, written or oral, entered into between the government and the defendant.

JAMES P. KENNEDY, JR.  
United States Attorney  
Western District of New York

By: \_\_\_\_\_

KYLE P. ROSSI  
Assistant United States Attorney  
Dated: July 3, 2020

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I have read this agreement, which consists of pages 1 through 12. I have had a full opportunity to discuss this agreement with my attorney, Jeffrey Ciccone, Esq. I agree that it represents the total agreement reached between me and the government. No promises or representations have been made to me other than what is contained in this agreement. I understand all of the consequences of my plea of guilty. I fully agree with the contents of this agreement. I am signing this agreement voluntarily and of my own free will.

\_\_\_\_\_  
FRANK SALERNO  
Defendant

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

\_\_\_\_\_  
JEFFREY CICCONE, Esq.  
Attorney for the Defendant

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_, 2020

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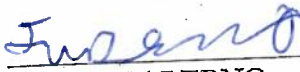
JAMES P. KENNEDY, JR.  
United States Attorney  
Western District of New York

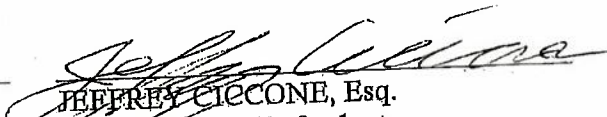
By: 

KYLE P. ROSSI  
Assistant United States Attorney  
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FRANK SALERNO  
Defendant  
Dated: 7/7, 2020

  
JEFFREY CICCONE, Esq.  
Attorney for the Defendant  
Dated: 7/2, 2020